

KDLA Report
Report to the KLA Board
Nov. 17, 2012

Budget

At this point in the year, state budget revenues are adequate to meet the requirement for the state budget so no mid-year cut is looming at this time. The next area of concern is for our allocation from the federal budget. As the federal budget provides funding for much of our library programming, programs will be negatively affected by federal budget reduction. The existing law calls for a reduction in federal funding of 9% in the year that starts October 1. Previous budget reductions have taken all the easy cuts and corners. We have done everything possible to mitigate the cuts. Any reductions from now on will hurt.

State Auditor's Survey of Special Districts

The report of the State Auditor from his survey of special districts was released on Nov. 14 with much press fanfare. KDLA and libraries were highlighted for best practices among special districts. However, the database of special district information was badly flawed and inaccurately reported that many libraries were not in compliance with state law. KDLA has been working with the State Auditor's office to correct these issues. Progress is being made, but there is much still to be corrected.

The State Auditor has promised legislation to allow for better oversight and transparency by special districts. He has promised that he wants to support libraries and the independence of library boards to perform their duties. We will be anxiously awaiting the legislation he is drafting.

Legislation

We are preparing for the legislative session that will be held early in 2013. As mentioned above, we will be watching the proposed legislation that comes as a result of the State Auditor's report on special districts. We are already aware that legislation will be introduced to require the fiscal court in each county to approve the library's budget. This would be devastating to library service across Kentucky as some fiscal courts would take advantage of the opportunity to limit taxes and become involved in the day to day operation of the library. We will be working to defend the system that has been in place for the last 60 years that has effectively built the public library system in Kentucky. We hope to continue to foster the public library as the last remaining element of true citizen managed government.

The Advocacy Committee has chosen Feb. 20 as legislative day when library supporters will come to Frankfort to demonstrate their support.

Trustee Certification

About 25% of the library trustees are participating in the Public Library Trustee Certification at this time – which is very good for the first year. KDLA is using the trustee training developed by ALA, but we are creating Kentucky specific training. The first of 5 modules (roles of the trustee and director) has been completed. Two other modules (financial responsibility and conducting a library board meeting) are in development.

BTOP Grant

The Federal grant for expanding public computing centers at 45 libraries and the accompanying Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grant is in its final year. Over 500 computers have been added to public libraries for public computing in addition to a significant number of servers, routers, switches, and printers. This federal funding is also being used to assist some of the libraries with additional broadband access for the first year. The libraries will apply for e-rate funding to continue this service.

In addition to the equipment provided through this grant, libraries are also conducting programming and services for unemployed and underemployed residents. Many libraries have undertaken programming

that they never before considered and they also created many new partnerships that will provide dividends in the future.

As a supplement to this grant, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation is providing funding for an e-rate coordinator to work with public libraries. As a result of the work of this consultant during the past year, Kentucky libraries received more than \$1 million in e-rate rebates.

State Records Center

For many years, KDLA has worked to obtain more space for temporary state records. Permanent state records are held in the state archives on the third floor at KDLA. Temporary state records are housed in two inadequate warehouses in Frankfort. This service is funded by fees from state agencies, so additional state general fund money is not needed. On Sept. 18 the Legislature's Capitol Projects and Bond Oversight Committee gave final approval for the project. Construction should begin soon. Moving the State Records center will take 18 months as 200,000 boxes of records must be moved – many from a very inaccessible location. No state general funds used for this project as receipts from records storage will pay the costs.

KDLA has also undertaken a training initiative for state agency records officers in records management. A bi-monthly workshop was offered in which 75 staff from 31 state government agencies participated. An online webinar is planned to continue this effort in the future.

Library Development

During the last 6 months there has been considerable library development. New libraries have opened in Bullitt County, Hancock County, Warren County, Nelson County (2 branches), Jefferson County and Owen County. The renovated Gallatin County Public Library opened in May. Ground was broken for a new library in Greenup County. The Casey County Public Library will reopen in December following severe damage from a storm in the summer.

Tax challenges

Setting of property tax rates has concluded for the year. KDLA staff worked with library boards in advance to help prepare for this process, limiting the number of challenges this year. Still, there have been several challenges to tax rates set by the board. Most serious is an effort by a group of taxpayers in Pulaski County to collect enough names on petitions to dissolve the library district. This effort was in response to a tax increase of \$1 per \$100,000 in property valuation. The petition collectors have provided misleading information as to the impact of their efforts. KDLA has been assisting the board's attorney to compile accurate information on the impact of dissolving the library district and repayment of the bonded indebtedness of the library. At this time, the petition process is still alive and the results uncertain.

The lawsuits against the library boards in Campbell County (3 citizens) and Kenton County (1 citizen) has been transferred from federal court to state circuit court.

The lawsuit by a group of 5 citizens in McLean County against the fiscal court for creating a library district earlier this year is scheduled for hearing late in November.

State Librarians' meeting in Lexington

State librarians from around the country came to Lexington Oct. 14-18 for their annual meeting. This was their first meeting in Lexington since 1975. Many topics were covered. A theme of the meeting was the need for libraries to focus on their communities and look "outward" for designing services. Many of the topics related to transitioning from a print focused to digital environment. The Gates Foundation representative talked about the Foundation's priorities for investing in libraries. Among the other topics discussed were continuing education, a national ad campaign for digital literacy, advocacy, federal issues, and, of course, budget. I'll fill you in on what we learned.

Susan Hildreth, Director of the Institute of Museum and Library Services, attended this meeting. IMLS is the federal agency that provides funding for libraries, offers grants, maintains statistics for public libraries,

and produces research about library issues. Susan met with scholars of the Bridging the Gap grant program to hear about their academic experiences. She also spoke to librarians from across the state about the future of the public library. Her presentation can be found at:

<http://kdla.adobeconnect.com/p1h7jzrqlme/>

Reorganization of State IT function

IT operations for the Executive Branch of state government is undergoing a reorganization. All IT staff in all agencies that deal with IT infrastructure are being transferred to the Commonwealth Office for Technology. KDLA will lose 3 staff members. In the long run, hopefully this reorganization will result in better and less costly service for KDLA.

Respectfully submitted,

Wayne Onkst